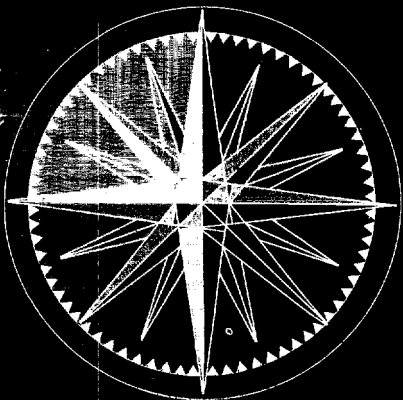


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SPECIAL REPORT

OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE

DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO GHANA'S NKRUMAH

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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DOMESTIC OPPOSITION TO GHANA'S NKRUMAH

Discontent is growing in Ghana. Formerly opposed principally by a few conservative elite groups, President Nkrumah in the past two years has lost much of his popularity among the masses. This erosion stems from both a worsening economic situation and increasing harsh authoritarianism. However, the legal and political weapons at Nkrumah's command have so far inhibited the development of an effective opposition movement, and those opponents who do speak out have been dealt with harshly.

Authoritarianism and Austerity

In the six years since Ghana attained independence, Nkrumah has used the power of the state and the apparatus of his Convention Peoples Party (CPP) to gradually exercise more and more control over the country's political life. Only a year after independence a Preventive Detention Act was passed which enables the government to hold any citizen without trial if he is suspected of activity which might endanger Ghana's security.

Nkrumah's popularity declined substantially in mid-1961 when he instituted a wage freeze, tax increases, and a compulsory savings system in an effort to halt a serious drain on foreign exchange reserves without reducing development and prestige expenditures. That September, rail and dock workers struck in protest--a demonstration unprecedented since independence--and some civil servants joined. Some strikers demanded release of political prisoners and the holding of new elections, as well as satisfaction of their economic grievances.

The government induced the strikers to return to work only through a combination of promises and threats, and afterward took punitive action against disgruntled workers and CPP members suspected of supporting the strike. Since then prices have risen by over 20 percent and, with wages frozen, dissatisfaction has mounted accordingly.

The United Party

The only organized opposition to Nkrumah's CPP comes from the United Party (UP). The UP was formed in 1957 by a merger of all opposition political parties, most of which reflected



Statue of "Founder of the Nation" Nkrumah
In front of Ghana's Parliament House

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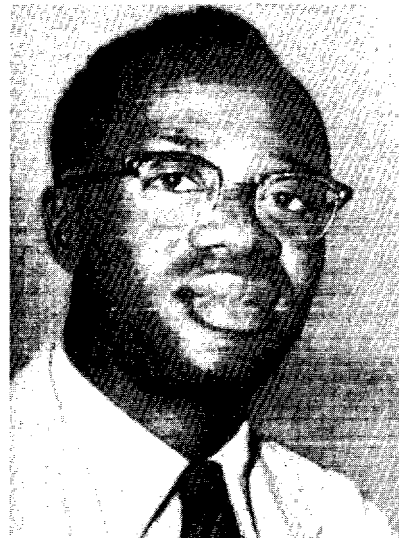
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the traditionalist views of such major tribal groups as the Ashanti, the Ewe and the Ga. Its leaders are conservative and pro-Western, and advocate a decentralized system of government which would respect tribal and regional rights.

The UP, which never enjoyed strong popular support, was emasculated soon after its birth by political neutralization of Ghana's tribal chiefs. The arrest of many of its leaders under the Preventive Detention Act, defections to the CPP, and flights into exile have reduced the party's representation in Parliament from about one third of the 114 seats to less than 10 percent. The opposition newspaper Ashanti Pioneer was nationalized in 1962. Party rallies have been restricted severely.

Many of the party's leaders fled to neighboring Togo, which became for a while its principal center for anti-Nkrumah activities. From there they conducted leaflet campaigns, attempted to subvert Ghanaian army and government officials, and may have been responsible for an attempt on Nkrumah's life last August and for subsequent bombings.

The coup in Togo on 13 January 1963 drove many UP militants still further away, fearing that the new regime might be unsympathetic to their cause. Secretary General C. K. Richardson is in Lagos, Nigeria, and reportedly has been promised the support



BUSIA

of the Nigerian Government. Kofi Busia, a former university professor now living in Europe, heads the exile organization.

The loss of the Togo base sharpened the UP's perennial problems of poor organization, insufficient discipline and lack of money.

They have failed to rally dissident Ghanians to the UP, and it is unlikely that they will ever be regarded as an effective alternative to the Nkrumah government. Their attempts to harass Nkrumah probably will continue, however.

Civil Servants and Students

Many civil servants are disaffected with the Nkrumah regime. As a group they tend to favor gradual economic development within the framework of a

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Western-oriented parliamentary system of government. Consequently they have been unhappy with Nkrumah's authoritarianism, his close association with the Sino-Soviet bloc, and his radical economic policies.

In addition, many of their former duties have been usurped by political appointees, often chosen for loyalty to Nkrumah rather than professional competence. Although most civil servants probably would welcome a conservative successor to Nkrumah, they are unlikely to risk taking part in opposition activities.

Most university students appear opposed to Nkrumah. In addition to a natural tendency to oppose the "ins," their training in Western political thought leads them to oppose Nkrumah's one-man rule and his association with the Sino-Soviet bloc. They may also see Nkrumah's egalitarian economic and social policies as a threat to their position as an elite group in Ghanaian society.

Although the need for government subsidies and jobs after graduation restrains open opposition, student criticism of Nkrumah prompted the government to take direct control of the University of Ghana in 1961. The regime warned that it would "deal ruthlessly with any further evidence of subversion and reaction." Articles in the March 1963 issue of the student magazine Legonite criticizing government efforts to "instill

fear into students" and its "obvious attempt to restrict Western influence in Ghana" may bring a new crackdown at the university.

CPP Dissension

Dissatisfaction exists even within Nkrumah's CPP which, as an organization, seems to have lost much of its former capacity to exert independent influence on the President. Many high-echelon moderates were purged at the time of the 1961 strikes. With some notable exceptions--such as economic adviser Ayeh-Kumi--few party moderates now have ready access to Nkrumah. They are likely to become increasingly frustrated as he tightens his control and excludes them further from policy-making. Lower level party members privately have voiced complaints about Nkrumah's policies and the breakdown of democracy in Ghana.

Komla Gbedemah is the most prominent and outspoken of the disaffected CPP members. Conservative and pro-Western, he was one of Nkrumah's closest and most capable advisers until he was removed from his position during the 1961 purge and fled Ghana under threat of arrest. In exile he has written anti-government pamphlets and letters, and gives financial support to the UP. However, he seems to lack essential leadership qualities and to have only a small following in Ghana, even among his fellow Ewe tribesmen.

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Outbreak of Violence

The aftermath of an assassination attempt against Nkrumah last August at Kulungugu, a town he was visiting on the Upper Volta border, has rekindled opposition at his center of power. In the following months, a series of bombing attacks in Accra killed at least 20 persons and injured nearly 400 more. The bombers and the planners of the attempted assassination at Kulungugu are unknown but were probably part of a small terrorist group with little following. Their objective appears to have been the creation of civil disturbances which would force Nkrumah to step down.

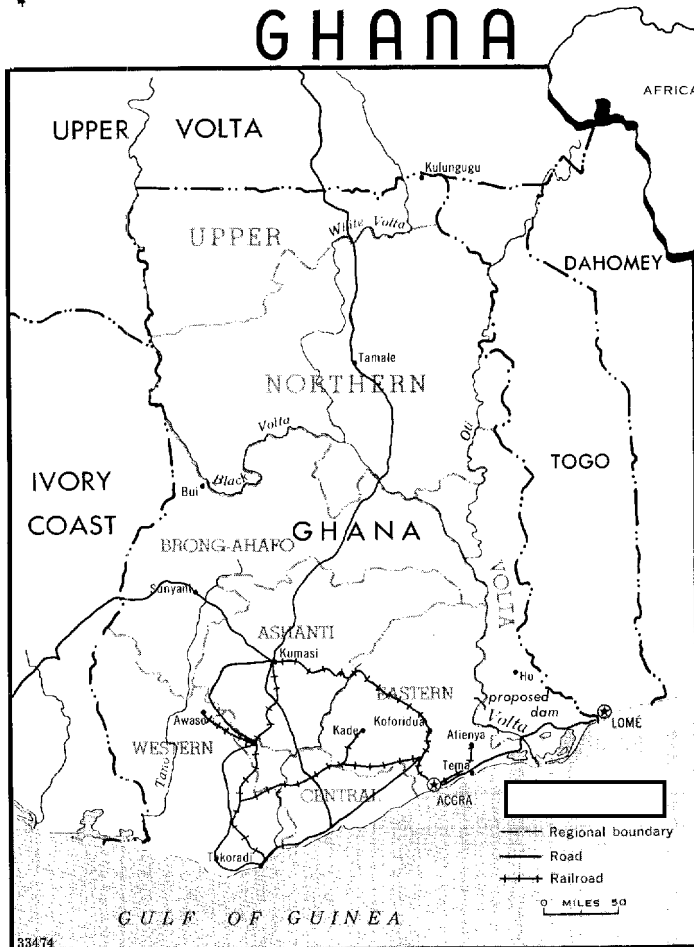
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In any event, Nkrumah's response to the violence caused a further drop in his personal popularity. Security measures were tightened, and for five months the frightened President almost completely cut himself off from public contact.

He arrested three prominent members of the Ga tribe--Tawia

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sympathy and respect of many Ghanaians and revived opposition of the Ga tribesmen in and around Accra--the area where he most needs support.

Despite the flurry of activity and accusations, the government apparently is still trying to locate the prime movers in the bombings. A special court recently concluded the first in what may be a series of trials, and sentenced five low-level accomplices in the bombings to hang. It is uncertain whether Adamafio, Coffie-Grabbe, and Adjei will be brought to trial, as the government reportedly has been unable to develop a strong case against them.

Prospects

Despite the large number of Ghanaians who would welcome the removal of the Nkrumah regime, few appear willing to jeopardize their own futures by taking active steps to overthrow the government. Disgruntled elements are unorganized, and hampered by the lack of a leader capable of rallying the normally easy-going Ghanaian people. However, as austerity measures continue, Ghanaians are likely to become increasingly disenchanted by the need for belt-tightening, despite promises of economic progress. In a situation where the expression of dissenting views is prohibited, sporadic outbreaks of violence are likely to recur.

Adamafio, minister of information; Ako Adjei, minister of foreign affairs; and H. H. Coffie-Grabbe, executive secretary of the CPP--and accused them of being "tools of the imperialists" in the Kulungugu assassination attempt. The Emashee Non, a group of Ga market women brought into the CPP by Adamafio, was disbanded. The press made references to Adamafio's "tribalist gang," lending credence to the belief that Nkrumah feared a Ga plot to take over the government.

Nkrumah's confused and vindictive behavior cost him the

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